

FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM OF ISRAEL

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1) DAVID'S CONQUESTS.

("Mivrah")

There is in the Talmud a discussion concerning the frontiers of Eretz-Israel, revolving around the problem of towns conquered by King David and not included in the limits delineated by the Pentateuch.

It seems that David did not have proper respect for the written word and in his wars of conquest relied more on the prowess of his soldiers than on the Holy Script. As a result he established, as all able and daring captains do, frontiers determined solely by the distance his army could strike.

After prolonged discussions, the sages of Israel arrived at a final decision: territories conquered by David were to be regarded as a part of Eretz-Israel and subject to the laws of Israel.

In later days the word "conquest" came to be held in odium. Its use was restricted to such expressions as "conquest of work" and "conquest of hearts", but anyone speaking of military conquests was considered a Fascist and an enemy of Israel.

So it is gratifying indeed that the word "conquest" is now again used in its proper military sense.

Unfortunately, those to whom the term is new, to whose mentality the very idea is foreign and whose acts are not an outcome of any premeditation, are likely to be somewhat confused in their use of the word.

This confusion is evident in the last declaration of the Government of Israel, proclaiming Jerusalem a conquered (!) territory (the original Hebrew word "kibbush" means "conquest").

We are not going to dwell here on the implication of this act: it has been dealt with and is well known. The press has published the declaration without going into its usual fits of jubilation, stressing the acuteness of the problem of dissidents.

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There is no doubt that the declaration was made with the sole object of transferring the famous Ben-Gurion's gun to Jerusalem, if not to be placed in the temple, then at least for a more practical purpose. The object is clear to all, dissidents included, and this time they will not be taken by surprise, as it happened at the beginning of Frishman Street in Tel-Aviv. It may be correctly surmised that Bernadotte too is aware of the ultimate aim of the declaration. We shall, therefore, waste no more time over the simple and self-evident aspects of the problem and, disregarding the inessential, return to its gist.

Jerusalem has always been Jewish, not merely in spirit or in the sentiment of our people, but also in its economy and its Jewish majority. No need to say what appearance does Jerusalem present to-day: with the sole exception of the Old City, still held by Arab soldiers, the population is entirely Jewish. Picture the amazement of the Jews of Jerusalem caused by the declaration of Jerusalem a Jewish occupied territory.

The number of Arabs in Haifa is now greater than in Jerusalem, nevertheless nobody would dream of declaring Haifa a Jewish occupied territory for the simple reason that it is in fact a Jewish city. But for some inexplicable reason Jerusalem is placed on the level of Acre, Jaffa and Nazareth or even lower - it has never been honoured with the visits of so many ministers as Nazareth was.

Sages of Mapai and Mapam are already tackling the difficult problem: are the conquests of David Ben-Gurion and David Shaltiel to be given the same status as the conquests of King David or not?

The question does not concern Damascus or Amman, it concerns Jerusalem. Picture the amazement and the mirth of coming generations.

But in order that there should be mirth and not mourning somebody will have to fight now.

2) RADIO BROADCAST.

A military governor is about to be appointed in Jerusalem, without the city being proclaimed a part of the State of Israel. While it is true that it was liberated by Jewish forces, the credit is by no means due to the Haganah alone; the city has been saved through the combined efforts of three distinct military organizations. While it may be presumed that without the Haganah the position of Jerusalem would have been precarious, almost hopeless, without the daring operations of the Fighters for Freedom in the western suburbs and in the centre its fall would have been

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certain. This is the view held by every impartial observer and it was, in fact, expressed by some newspapermen (Gabriel Zifroni for example). Therefore no single military body - in this case the Haganah - has a right to establish a dictatorial military rule in Jerusalem and demand other military organizations to take orders from it. Such a course would be justified only if Jerusalem were incorporated in the State of Israel, for then the three bodies would amalgamate with the army of Israel. So long as the Government is bent on keeping Jerusalem outside the State of Israel, the Haganah forces in Jerusalem are welcome to capture and rule any Arab held areas, but they cannot possibly "liberate" any areas already liberated by allied Jewish military organizations.

The Government's intentions with regard to Jerusalem are well known. In the circumstances we can only bring to its notice (and to the notice of the people) that, in the same way that we fulfilled our pledge to join the army of Israel when the State of Israel has been proclaimed, so our men in Jerusalem shall join the army the moment Jerusalem is incorporated in the State of Israel. Without this preliminary condition any attempt to crush the Fighters of Jerusalem will fail as ignominiously as failed all attempts to disarm us prior to the establishment of the State.

A revolutionary movement that is certain about its aim and its way attempt to repress us will cause us to reconsider our obligations towards the state.

A revolutionary movement that sees clearly its way will not be frightened by Ben-Gurion's sanctified gun.

3) We understand that the Britons arrested for their spying activities in Jerusalem have been offered release on bail. One of them has already availed himself of the opportunity and proceeded to Nathanias for rest. We cannot say whether or not he will attempt to escape, but the offer of release on bail made to persons charged with a grave offence is highly suspicious. It looks very much like an invitation to escape. The Government is in a predicament: the acquittal of the accused would give rise to public indignation, while their condemnation would displease Britain. In the circumstances, an "escape" would be the best way out.